

## POLITICAL UNREST AND SSC EXAMINATION

Thousands of students, who will appear at this year's SSC Examination within less than four weeks from now, are virtually at their wit's end. This is the first public examination that they will sit for on completion of ten years of schooling. For the obvious reason, it is a very important stage of their academic life. The level of their performance at the ensuing SSC examination will largely determine whether or not they would get access to higher education, the kind of career that they will individually be able to choose and whether or not they will attain commendable success in life. But the prevalent volatile political situation does not permit either the SSC candidates or their worried guardians to even make a reassuring guess if a congenial academic environment, free of uncertainties and unrest, would soon descend to allow the candidates to prepare for and appear at the public examination seriously, without divided attention and anxiety! What a pity!

Excellent academic training of the younger generations is crucial for future advancement of every nation. It ought to be the foremost priority in the national schemes of things as quality education alone determines how rapidly will a people attain success in their efforts at dismantling poverty, transforming the odds into opportunities and devising ways to compete with other nations in productivity and trade and commerce. In fact, progressive internal social and political development, which secures conditions for steady and rapid advancement in all other important fields, is also dependent on this critical factor. While no education keeps a people blind-folded to dig into their own heels in confusion, incomplete education that impedes the clarity of vision induces them to harbour unworkable ideas and behave wild to cause their own doom. That's why wise and ambitious nations, keen on improving their collective lot, do not permit the quality of their education to be compromised on any ground whatsoever: Can we claim credit for always taking such a prudent stand?

Normally, the academic life extends up to sixteen years in our country. Those who study medicine spend some more time in the academic institutions to complete their training and acquire their diploma. Imagine how persisting unrest over the years, marked by frequent hartals and periodic unscheduled closure of academic institutions, had a telling effect on education in our country. Those who have the means or connections to send their wards abroad for studying peacefully and complete courses on time did or have done so. Even some political leaders of standing and influence are known to have preferred to have their sons and daughters study abroad. Those who have really suffered or are suffering the backlashes of an incompatible internal academic atmosphere are none but the sons and daughters of the poor silent majority, always caught up in the struggle to have their two ends met. Why should the dream of this vast majority be frustrated for no fault of theirs?

The agitating opposition political parties are on record for suspending their current political programmes on the occasion of the Biswa Ijtema at Tongi. Will they go for a similar option until the ensuing SSC examination has ended? If so done, it will relieve the SSC candidates and their worried guardians of their present anxiety about whether or not the examination will take place as per the schedule and in a congenial atmosphere. The facts of the nation and its future being above everything make one to anticipate that the parties concerned may show restraint in a display of genuine love for the young generation. Will they really do so?